



FANTAZINE

STAGE 1 LEVEL 1

APRIL 1993

END BOSS

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LEVEL BOSSES

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FANTAZINE is published monthly. Cost is \$1.50 for one issue or a five issue subscription for \$5.00. Send cash, check or money order (payable to Pat Reynolds) to:

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SEMRAD HUNTING

BY PAT REYNOLDS

As you all know, Ed Semrad is the Editor of that ever-popular source of all information for game fanatics, Electronic Gaming Monthly. As I see it, EGM forgot to present one award in their best/worst of... issue. I'll do it for them. The award of Hypocrite of the Year goes, easily, to Ed Semrad. Congratulations.

For all of you out there going "EGM is great, go to hell Pat!" let me explain.

First, in his Insert Coin column in the March EGM, Ed states that the NES is dead. Later in the same issue's Fact Files, they show new NES titles coming out this year from top companies Konami, Capcom, and Tradewest. Has anyone told them that the system is dead? Apparently not, because the April EGM shows new games from Tecmo, Technos, and Capcom. Ed even gives a new NES game an 8 in the review section. Hey, I know that the NES will fizzle out someday, but it hasn't happened yet.

Now for my big gripe. Did you all read his Insert Coin ravings in the April issue? Hoo boy. Where do I start?

First, Semrad states not as his opinion, which it is, but as a fact that an unplayable, 20% finished version of Sega's CD shooter Silpheed was the best game at the Winter CES. He even goes so far as to suggest that Sega was showing great modesty by not running a side-by-side demo of their game and Nintendo's StarFox. It seems to me that Sega was lucky that Nintendo didn't run the same comparison. Players would flock to the completed, playable StarFox.

Also, in a blatantly false statement, Semrad says that Sega doesn't like to brag about their games. Puhleeze! Has Ed seen their Game Gear TV commercial in which Sega not only attacks the Gameboy as being inferior but insults Gameboy owners as well (by comparing them to a dog).

The way I see it, Nintendo beat Sega to the show with a completed, playable 3D shooter and Sega made every effort to hide Silpheed because of its unfinished condition. Wait until Summer CES, Ed, and you can declare it game of the decade in its finished state if you'd like. I personally need to play a game before I recommend it. Ask yourself this: What if Silpheed looks great but plays poorly?

I'm not sure why, but it seems to me that this guy has picked up a serious anti-Nintendo stance somewhere along the line. To this Editor, he's lost all credibility.

WE'RE BACK!

If you don't already know, this is the fanzine that was formerly known as GameLord; that is, until I got a letter from Mr. Chad Okada of SNK, who calls himself The Game Lord. I immediately sent out loads of letters to everyone who had recieved a copy of GameLord and went about making the changes to a new name and whatnot. About five days after I got Mr. Okadas' letter, and I had sent a letter of my own in reply, he called me. Much to my surprise, he said that he wanted to work out some agreement so that I could keep the title GameLord because he thought it was a really good fanzine. We never got around to discussing the terms of this agreement, however, as I had by then already committed myself to the change and could not continue using the title now that I knew it was taken by someone else (sort of... if I wanted to get technical, my fanzine was called GameLord, and Okada claims the rights to The Game Lord. But I digress). The point is, I respect his right to the name and I know how I'd feel in his place. I should make it clear that Mr. Okada did not force me to make the switch and I harbor no anger toward him.

Okay, with that out of the way, welcome to issue #1 of Fantazine. You'll notice that I chose to print an already completed letter page intended for GameLord #3 because I think there are some good comments and insight about other things in them.

We've gone from a staff of 2 to a team of 7, plus any contributions that roll in, such as Jess Ragans' column and Ulrich Kempfs' artwork in this issue. Fantazine will present writers with a diverse range of skill, interests, and gaming knowledge. It will go beyond anything GameLord was in this premiere issue and will continue to improve as time goes by. By next year, I hope to at least be in the running for Best Fanzine in EG. That is my goal. To accomplish this goal, we will put out the best fanzine we can, and have as much fun doing it as we can. The way this first issue is looking, don't be surprised if we go bi-monthly soon, to concentrate on making bigger and

better issues (wait till you see the Ladybug cover!).

I want Fantazine to be more opinion-driven than GL was, so I'm letting anyone who wants to write an opinion column to do so. That doesn't mean just staffers either. If you have something to say, write it and send it off. You can make up your own title or let it go under the In My Opinion heading.

Now, introducing the Fantazine staff briefly; more detailed profiles are elsewhere in this issue: this premiere issue welcomes five new writers to the old GameLord staff of Matt and I. David Wilson will add reviews of Amiga games (often a good indicator of upcoming home games), as well as his insights into the world of computer BBS and shareware. Pete Foote is both a conventional gamer and an iBM player. Mark Allen takes us back to the dawn of home video gaming with his collection of Atari 2600, 5200, and 7800 titles. Tim Priest, who I believe is certifiably insane, will talk about whatever he wants to. My longtime friend Rich Plummer has interesting views on gaming and will write about them while he works his butt off in the Navy.

You'll also notice new sections like The Standoff, Pats' Predictions, Classic Corner, and The Wish List. These new features will trickle in over the first few issues.

Thanks to Ulrich Kempf for the Bubsy drawing on the last page, and Jess Ragan for his opinionated CD column. Remember, keep playing and never give up!



RT

FANTALETTERS

All right! Letters have finally begun to come in, and I get to have my very own letter column!! Me so happy!

Dear Pat,

Wow. GL #2 was an unbelievable improvement over #1. The first one was good, this one is great. You have improved in layout and content. Your cover (as with the last issue) is excellent. The switch to (what I assume is) a MAC cleans up what is already a very readable 'zine. As to specifics, the award of "The Big Cheese" was in order to Sega, just for the fact that they, in the midst of a few excellent titles, continue to pump out a slew of crappy ones. Played Batman Returns yet? Don't.

Tell Matt that nothing is better than World Of Illusion. Believe it or not, I gave it "Game of The Year" in IBTL #2. Also, ask Matt if he was on crack when he said that the mediocre Shadow Dancer is superior to Revenge of Shinobi. As if you care, my suggestion for the Sega CD pack-in disc (not necessarily "classic") would have included: Toejam And Earl, Sonic 2, Streets Of Rage 2, and World Of Illusion.

I partly agree with your reviews of Prince Of Persia. The SNES version is THE best of the lot, no doubt. I however, think that the Sega CD rendition sucks. It pales in comparison to the identical Duo (excellent) and

MAC (also fantastic) editions. Want a Duo review of it? Feel free to reprint the review I did of it in IBTL #1. Use it if you want.

Now that I know that my fanzine is not one of your "...favorites and most worthy of your cash", you can rest assured that you won't be receiving any further issues. Only joking.

Incidentally, it looks as if that Johnston deal is dead and buried. Hooray.

In regard to "In My Opinion", I will most certainly go for the Sega CD version (of Mortal Kombat) for the pathetic reason that I'm a violent person and rather enjoy the "shock factor".

Having problems with Aaron Buckner and Mindstorm? Same goes for everyone else in this known region of the universe. I, at once, (still do?), held the esteemed position of an Assistant Editor on this, "the #1 fanzine". I have no idea where Aaron or his fanzine are. I assume gone forever. I just got a letter from another Assistant Ed. who stated that "Mindstorm is as dead as Kennedy". Bingo. Anyway, yes, I would be willing to part with a copy. I'll get it out to you in a day or so.

To wrap up with miscellaneous comments: I'm going to play a prototype of StarFox later today, so I'll let you know how it goes. Sorry to hear about Maria. Gameboy blurs too much for me. Ecco is far too

frustrating. Haven't yet played SOR 2. A flaming BREAST?! My favorite comic of all time? Tales Of Terror (all 13 of 'em) from Eclipse. If you're open to it, I may contribute. I'll give you a call about possible artwork for IBTL. The next issue comes out April 11. Yes, I can beat MegaMan. Do I get a cookie now? You have one of the best fanzines out there, so keep it up. Stay in touch. You now have "reader mail"!

Sean Pettibone

- Thanks for the novel, Sean. I especially liked the drawing of MegaMan being blown up. For any readers who don't know, Sean is Editor of In Between The Lines, which I reviewed last issue. Look in the Fanzine Feedback section for his address. PAT

Dear Pat,

Thanks for the fast response sending #1. I enjoyed it a lot. You have a good sense of humor. It's hard to believe that this is your first one. Your reviews are very good and the Maria Nod gives an added personal touch. Tell Matt to keep writing about the Sega CD. Maybe Sega will make some good stuff for it. I feel I should have waited for some games before I bought it. Anyway, here's a buck for #2. Good luck. P.S. Great cover!!!

Nicholas P. Masciotti

- Thanks for the praise, Nicholas, I can always use more of it. I'm glad you like GL so far, I'll try my best to make sure it only gets better. PAT

ATARI LOR

BY MARK ALLEN

Dear Pat,

I read about your fanzine in Digital Press #10. I was highly impressed with the artwork! How long did the cover take to draw? I would highly appreciate a copy of issue 1 in exchange for my fanzine, Video Universe. As you can see, our artwork by Dave Blank is extremely well-done. I hope you enjoy our fanzine and I can't wait to see GameLord.

George Wilson

- Thanks for reminding me about our coverage in Digital Press, George. GameLord was awarded with Best New Fanzine and Best Cover Art in DP #10. I told George that I couldn't review VU until next issue, but because of an unexpected dropout (see next letter) I've reviewed his 'zine in this very issue. Check it out!

PAT

Dear Pat,

I recieved the 2nd issue of GameLord and I really enjoyed it. I liked GameMan; he's an interesting character, and original. If you ever need any help just ask, I'd be willing to write for GameLord.

I was thinking, and decided that if it's OK with you, don't review VGM in your next issue, but review the first issue of my new 'zine, Viewpoint (no more VGM!). Thanks. GameLord will be reviewed in Viewpoint.

Alex Frias

- Alex is (was?) the Editor of a fanzine called Video Gaming Monthly. I was all set too review it in this issue when I got this letter. As soon as I recieve Viewpoint #1, you can expect to see a review. If it's as good as VGM was, it'll be a hit. PAT

The Atari 2600 remains an excellent value in the modern market of \$59 16-bit releases and \$300 CD players. It is also a good investment for avoiding the market cycle of planned obsolescence, as this system is so far gone some people throw it and its' carts in the trash during spring cleaning. (One person said he didn't think anyone would want it).

I have seen the Video Computer System in second-hand stores for as little as \$7 without the power supply or controllers. Generally speaking, \$25 is a reasonable price for the system with power, joysticks and paddles. Good places to look include ads in fanzines, garage sales, and any store selling used stuff that nobody wants. Every town has one; a place where poor people can buy clothes and guys in bad cars can buy Harley - Davidson banners in ironic peace.

Software is even easier to find. Over 400 games were released for this system, so common ones can be found for 50 cents to \$2. With so many releases there are obviously many rare games, making this inexpensive system a collectors' dream. Most of the expense comes in the searching, as top dollar for a rare game is unlikely to exceed \$50.

Ataris' original releases had no pictures on the label, just the title, number of game variations and players, the serial number, and the words "game program", all written in lowercase. I'm not sure when, but around 1981 Atari started printing picture labels and uppercase writing on all new and previously released carts, making the old labels desirable to the collector crowd.

Other collecting twists include good label condition, boxes and instructions, and owning all the releases by a particular company.

The abundance of systems and games make this system a winner in two ways. Atari sold some 30 million consoles, making them plentiful and cheap because of the low demand. It seems there are still carts sitting in warehouses in addition to the used games. Secondly, as indicated by the volume of sales, the games are fun to play. This sets the VCS apart from other classic systems. If I were a die-hard Magnavox fan, I could scour the earth for an Odyssey 2, then search even harder and pay a fortune for games. But then what? Except for Quest For Rings and K.C. Munchkin, playing this beater of a system would make a day off from work a purgatory. An Atari 2600 makes a humble flat a miniature utopia.

IN MY OPINION

BY PAT REYNOLDS

Well, everybody knows that SFII is coming out for Genesis, that Capcom is doing it, and that it will be the upgraded Champion Edition. I have some predictions about this cart that I know are true. First, EGM is going to go berserk about this game AGAIN, probably running features on it for 3 or 4 issues up to the games' release. They probably won't come out and tell us what its shortcomings are, but will instead run side-by-side pics of the SNES version and the new game.

Second, the Genesis game will NOT be as good as the SNES game. Think about it. The same amount of memory, four new characters and new moves, there's no way. The music and sound effects won't be as good. The animation will probably be less fluid and the voices will have mixed results.

Now, don't get me wrong. SFII.CE is going to be a great game. Capcom is actually making it, so it can't be bad. I wasn't surprised by the hook-up between Capcom and Sega, either. If you remember, one of the earliest Genesis games was originally a Capcom title, Ghouls N' Ghosts. Sega later did Capcom proud with their translation of my former favorite arcade game of all time, Strider. And the prospect of seeing MegaMan games for NES, SNES, Gameboy, and Genesis has me drooling.

Moving on...So, Blast Processing is "The total dedication of the Genesis system to giving a character onscreen a very quick blast of speed...the fastest power punch ever delivered on a 16-bit system." Oh, really? Can you say Blankas' roll attack? How about Death Valley Rally? I wish Sega would stop wasting their time with attacks on Nintendo. Their Blast Processing commercial makes me want to buy a SNES. If I didn't already have one I would.

The big question around here is whether or not Fantazine will be at SCES.(That and how long it took me to draw the cover to GL #1).

You know we'd all love to go, but there are more important things on my summer agenda, like going to California. Don't sweat it, even if I'm not there, I'll still tell you what was hot. Hell, I'll do it right now. Mortal Kombat is going to garner game of the show honors from some, while others are already writing their praises of Segas' Silpheed (I've already heard that it's really not as great as they say). If Capcom shows Super MegaMan it'll be a big draw, and of course the Genesis SFII game will be a major event. Nintendo may show its' second SFX chip game, and any Sega CD games will be very welcome.

Why have none of the mags pointed out the similarities between Space Megaforce and Blazing Lazers??? SM is not as great as they say either.

I think Digital Press should have won EGs' Best Fanzine award, but I haven't seen the winner yet so maybe I should reserve judgement.

Now for some quick game comments. Batman Returns for Genesis is a dog; so is Revenge of the Joker. Can nobody do a good Batman game? Alien 3 for SNES looks hot...Predator vs. Alien could be decent if it plays well...Global Gladiators is a great game, you really have to hear it to believe it! Bomberman is my new current favorite game, it rocks with 5 players; truly more fun than a human being should be allowed to have...Doomsday Warrior, what's up with all these blatant SFII clones that go and invent new control schemes? If you're going to rip it off at least do it right! Up for jump and back to defend, damnit! Fatal Fury for Genesis should be renamed Fatal Frustration, the special moves are too hard to do and the background/foreground switching is really annoying. At least they ripped off SFII's control right. Blaster Master for Genesis, oh man, I'm still tense from the last one. Tiny Toons is great on SNES, sucks on Genesis. Can't wait to see Battletoads and Double Dragon. I'm outta room, so until next month...Never give up!

TO PLAY OR NOT TO PLAY

STARFOX
SHOOTER
1 PLAYER

NINTENDO
SNES
AVERAGE

JOUST
AERIAL COMBAT
1 OR 2 PLAYERS

ATARI
7800
AVERAGE

GRAPHICS: 9
SOUND: 8

CONTROL: 9
FUN: 9

GRAPHICS: 9
SOUND: 10

CONTROL: 10
FUN: 10

OVERALL: 9

OVERALL: 10

So how good is big Ns' super FX game? I'm sure this question is on the minds of hundreds of gamers who haven't yet seen StarFox. If you're one of those poor, unlucky fools, let me tell you.

StarFox is great!!! Nintendo strikes again with charismatic characters, perfect gameplay, and loads of options.

You play as a fox, who leads a quartet of pilots on a mission to thwart the evil Andross. Your wingmen generally stay behind you, but will occasionally leap into the fray or be chased into the distance by an enemy fighter, which you must destroy before your friend is blown to pieces. The radio transmissions that your wingmen send are humorous; indecipherable muttering is accompanied by a picture of the pilot and his message in text. Each wingman has a unique personality and flies differently.

There are 3 different courses to the final destination, the planet Venom. Each route sports a different level of difficulty, as well as backgrounds and meaner end bosses. I walked through the game at level 1 the day I got it. I got about halfway through level 2 and only to the 2nd stage of level 3.

Music is very well done and the sound effects are excellent. What real voice there is is very good, especially the intro and ending.

I've always liked polygon-fill graphics, because I'd rather see graphics done that way than try to be realistic and fail. The polygons scale and rotate beautifully. My favorite part is in Sector X where dozens of girders hurtle at you from different angles! Intense! This is the best thing to hit the SNES since SFII!!! Get it.

-Pat Reynolds

This is a classic arcade game translated to masterful perfection on the 7800.

The player is a knight mounted on an ostrich. Player 2 rides a goofier bird unnamed in the instructions. Each press of the fire button makes the birds' wings flap once, repeated firing makes it fly. Push the stick to the left or right to move.

The enemies are Bounders, Hunters, and Shadow Lords. All are armed with lances, and when contact is made, the higher lance wins and the opposing rider is dismounted.

When a player is jousted, his bird flies off the screen and a new bird and rider materializes on a ledge. You cannot be harmed until the button is pressed, allowing time for enemies to leave the vicinity.

A defeated enemy drops an egg, which hatches into the next level enemy rider, who waits for a new bird to fly in, land, and be mounted.

The playfield is a series of ledges with a big piece of land at the bottom of the screen. At the right and left bottom is a pool of lava, where the hand of a lava troll pulls you in if you fly too close.

A pterydactyl appears during Ptery Waves, and if you wait too long before finishing a wave. The only way to kill it is to ram your lance down its' throat, a difficult task indeed.

In the 2 player mode, the players can kill each other and are awarded points for doing so, including bonus points during a Gladiator Wave. Points are awarded for not killing each other during a Team Wave.

The screen warps on the sides for added freedom of movement.

The graphics are excellent, and are essentially as good as the arcade game. The flapping wings look good, and the ostrich is especially detailed. Player 2s' bird looks appropriately silly, complete with bobbing head while walking or flying.

The control is a remarkable simulation of flight. Two highlights are flying backwards and walking. The bird can walk at varying speeds, and the legs look very good and birdlike. Get going fast and push the stick the opposite direction and the bird puts on the brakes, putting its' legs out straight and screeching to a halt.

The sounds are also excellent. The dissolving of the ledges between rounds, jousting of an enemy, materialization of a player, screech of a ptery and opening game sound are all done to perfection. This game is typical of the arcade translations Atari made in 1984 to show off the system at trade shows. The 1987 copyright coincides with the games' release; the screen copyright says 1984.

Joust is similar to Ms. PacMan in that after playing the 7800 version for awhile, the arcades' control and gameplay pale by comparison. I don't know of a higher compliment I could give this game, and it deserves every one it receives.

Joust notes: Don't play this game with the 7800 controllers if you want them to work in the future. Fire buttons take a lot of pounding in this game, and the 7800s' are not the most reliable.

-Mark Allen

X-MEN
ACTION
1 OR 2 PLAYERS

SEGA
GENESIS
HARD

GRAPHICS: 8
SOUND: 5

CONTROL: 8
FUN: 7

OVERALL: 7

My first impression of X-Men was that it was just another entry in Segas' long list of average games. However, after playing for awhile, I decided that it falls somewhere between those mediocre titles (Talespin, Biohazard Battle, Chakan) and Segas' excellent games (Sonic 2, Streets Of Rage 2, Ecco).

The game takes place in the Danger Room of the X-Mens' mansion. Similar to the Holodeck on Star Trek, the Danger Room can project holograms and images to create a 3D environment in which the mutant superheroes hone their skills. Unfortunately, the rooms' computer has gone haywire and is using real weaponry against the good guys.

You get 4 X-Men to play as; Wolverine, Cyclops, Nightcrawler, and Gambit. Marvel comic fans should take note that Nightcrawler hasn't been an X-Man for some time now while Gambit is a recent addition. As long as I'm talking trivial gripes, Wolverine should be able to use his claws without draining his mutant power and Nightcrawler should stick to walls.

You can call in 4 additional heroes as special attacks to clear the screen or inflict damage on bosses.

During the game, you're allowed to switch characters a set number of times each stage. Once one dies, you can't bring him back. Also, the characters' life bars aren't refilled after each stage; rather you must practice in the Danger Room between levels to partially refill them. There are no continues, so the game gets hard fast. Trying to keep everybody alive and still get through each stage can be a real chore.

Since you use the characters twice as much in the 2 player mode, and must share them, you're likely to get killed off even quicker.

The graphics are good, especially the main characters. Cyclops and Wolverine look just like their comic book counterparts, but Gambit and Nightcrawler really shine. Gambit wears his trademark trenchcoat and carries his staff, and 'crawlers' tail flicks when he

stands still.

Sounds and music are below average, however. The sound effects are just plain bad, sometimes gratingly so. Can nobody make the effect of Wolverine popping his claws sound good? The music is uninspired at best, annoying at worst.

Finally, with the rise of equality in video games, where are the female X-Men? Sure, Storm and Rogue show up to clear the screen, and Jean Grey brings you back onscreen if you fall into a pit, but why can't you play as them or Psylocke and Jubilee?

To wrap all this up, X-Men is a slightly above average game, which should appeal to fans of the comic and is the most faithful comic translation to date.

-Pat Reynolds

WING COMMANDER 2
SPACE COMBAT
1 PLAYER

ORIGIN
IBM
HARD

GRAPHICS: 10 CONTROL: 7
SOUND: N/A (FOR ME) FUN: 9
OVERALL: 9

Let me start off by saying that WC2 is an incredible game! Anyone who says different should be lined up and shot with a plasma ray.

The graphics are unbelievable, especially in the long storylines between each mission with animated, almost real looking people. There's almost no beating this game but it does have one flaw to my dissatisfaction; there is no way to reverse the controller so that up is down and down is up. Because I play a lot of flight sims I'm used to that reverse control of the game. Aside from that minute factor it's an unstoppable game.

-Pete Foote

WARLORDS
COMBAT
1 TO 4 PLAYERS

ATARI
2600
AVERAGE

GRAPHICS: 7
SOUND: 7

CONTROL: 7
FUN: 7

OVERALL: 7

This game is a cross between Foospong and Breakout, but with a more exciting goal: Destroy your enemies!

In each corner is a symbol representing a warlord, surrounded by a

castle. In front of each castle is a shield, which turns the corner to protect the castles' two sides. An invisible barrier prevents wraparound between the top and bottom and sides of the screen.

When play is started, a pong ball begins travelling through the arena. Each player uses it to his advantage to smash through his opponents castle and kill the warlords. Some variations allow the ball to be caught and fired at will, while in others it ricochets around.

The castles are multi-colored, getting darker near the warlords. The darker the brick, the faster the ball moves after hitting it, making the end of each round intense.

The graphics are only average, except each time a brick is hit. Then the screen flashes once very quickly, as if lightning were striking. After a warlord is killed, he and his shield are still present, although invisible. Every time a brick is hit, his ghost can be seen in the lightning flash. That player can also use the invisible shield to deflect the ball. These touches add greatly to the game.

The sound of a brick being smashed is devastating, exceeded only by the nasty crunch of a warlord being killed. The sound of the ball hitting the shield is also nice.

The deflection games are generally better than the catch and shoot variations, due to the elements of chance and the fast pace. Nothing is worse than bouncing the ball between your shield and castle and killing your own warlord. Of course, nothing is more amusing than watching your enemies do the same.

-Mark Allen

KIRBYS' DREAMLAND NINTENDO
ACTION GAMEBOY
1 PLAYER EASY

GRAPHICS: 8
SOUND: 7

CONTROL: 8
FUN: 8

OVERALL: 8

Just when I was thinking that big N was only going to support their portable system with remakes of classic NES title (Metroid, Mario, Kid Icarus) they bring out a completely original game!

I'm not sure what Kirby is, but he's got one hell of a mean appetite. He inhales enemies and converts them into star-missiles, and he can take in a big gulp of air and fly, then fire the air at a bad guy! All in all, a pretty versatile guy.

Aside from the innovative defense of eating your your enemies (even that's been done before), Kirby is an otherwise normal side-scroller. The stages are well-drawn with fun bosses that are large and well animated.

Nintendo makes good games, and it's always a pleasure when they introduce a new character to their lineup of stars like Mario, Samus Aran, and Kid Icarus. It looks like they'll support Kirby with at least one NES sequel, which is good, because he's one little,er,thing that deserves a second look.

-Pat Reynolds

ARMOR AMBUSH	MATTEL M NET
TANK COMBAT	ATARI 2600
2 PLAYERS ONLY	N/A

GRAPHICS: 5	CONTROL: 8
SOUND: 5	FUN: 8
OVERALL: 7	

Each player has two tanks, one of which is held in reserve. You can only move and shoot one tank at a time. To change tanks, the joystick is pulled down. The tank can also turn left and right and move forward straight or to the left or right. When a players two tanks are destroyed, the fight moves to a new scene until a players total of 25 tanks are lost.

The setting is a variety of countrysides with changing features, which include buildings, woods, roads, lakes, rivers and bridges. Your tank moves at different speeds over these surfaces, and shots don't travel as far in the woods.

The addition of an extra tank for each player is a great improvement over Combat and brings strategy to the game. The game is more realistic due to the actual destruction of tanks and different terrains instead of Combats' Pong field.

The rumbling tank motors are higher pitched and not as satisfying as the throaty Combat motors. Armor Ambush is perhaps more realistic, though. I am unsure, having never driven a tank.

The gunfire is meaner in Armor Ambush, compared to Combats' annoying popgun sound.

The graphics are a simple but adequate representation of a countryside. The tank explosions are nicely done, and look almost Intellivisionish.

The lack of a one-player option is grating. Perhaps programming a worthy computer opponent is too difficult on this system. Atari didn't do it for Combat, a game which desperately needed one since it was packed with the VCS for many years.

Overall, this is an excellent game, and well worth the buck.

-Mark Allen

ROAD AVENGER	RENOVATION
ACTION/DRIVING	SEGA CD
1 PLAYER	AVERAGE

GRAPHICS: 9	CONTROL: 8
SOUND: 9	FUN: 8

OVERALL: 9

Hey, you're driving along one day with your girlfriend, fiance, or wife, depending on which magazine you read, and a band of ruthless hooligans runs you right off the road, down a cliff and into a really big rock. Your car explodes, the chick is incinerated, but you walk out of the flaming wreck. Whatcha gonna do? Check into the closest hospital? Hell no! You hop into your other car and hit the road with the intention of killing every single member of the gang, called S.C.U.M., with your car.

Sound reasonable? Of course not! This dudes' woman was better off dying in that crash, cuz he's one crazy mutha! Nothing stops him from his pursuit, and innocent bystanders and property be damned! One scene has you chasing a motorcycle up a staircase in an art museum, through a large room filled with people, and out through a window. You then procede to run rampant through a local park, narrowly missing two kids and a whole lot of other people. You get the idea.

Don't expect much in the way of inner-game continuity, either. At the end of one scene your car escapes a sewer system just as the gate comes down, RIPPING THE TOP OF YOUR CAR OFF!!! Of course, a few seconds later

again, it's all better. Ever read Christine? I'm pretty certain now I know what happened to that car. So much crap flies off of your car from collisions and other scrapes you could start a junkyard, and yet it always remains brand new.

But seriously, all ludicrous plotlines and inconsistencies aside, RA is truly a wonder to behold. It's like playing an interactive cartoon, all done in that distinctive Japanimation style and with such speed and fluidity you want to pop a couple Dramamine before playing.

The coolest feature of the game is the way it will cut to an outside view of your car to show you what you just did, then cut instantly back to the standard cockpit view, leaving you breathless and in awe. Some scenes have so many of these cinema cuts that you'll wonder if you're even playing the game anymore.

Now, to be fair, a lot of people are turned off by this kind of game, which is nothing more than following onscreen prompts and reacting quickly enough as you watch the action unfold, similar to the old laser disc coin-op, Dragons' Lair. I, however, couldn't care less, because it's so much fun to watch. I'm often known to put the game on just to watch the opening cinema, which has an incredible theme song with wacky lyrics like "Feel the warmth of my car...", over and over again.

Because the game is the same every time you play it, you'll beat it quickly, which was not a problem for me, because I wanted to finish it as fast as possible just to see the whole episode. Then I played it over and over again to find all the great death sequences! And if you get tired of the normal mode there's even a Hard mode which gives you no prompts and is very, very difficult.

What can I say, I love this game! The plot is so far out it actually works, the visuals are incredible, the best animation of this type so far, and the music and sound effects are incredible! A must-have for Sega CD owners.

- Pat Reynolds

STAR CONTROL BALLISTIC
SPACE COMBAT GENESIS
1 or 2 PLAYERS ADJUSTABLE

GRAPHICS: 9 CONTROL: 7
SOUND: 9 FUN: 8
OVERALL: 8

Star Control was Sega's first 12 megabit game. The graphics are some of the best out of all the genesis games I've played. And the sound is marvelous, especially with the earphones on. It sounds like Battlestar Gallactica or a Star Wars game when the ships shoot at each other. It's a smooth game that never has any "jumpiness" to it and the graphics are incredible when you "access the starship databank" to get info on any of the 14 ships in the game.

In this game you can pit any of the 14 craft against each other, and even against itself. The full game option is a bit confusing because you never know what star to move to next. The end of each game sucks because every time it shows one of two pictures depending on who won. I mean, I don't expect a whole lot but one picture, come on. I would like to close this article by recommending this game to all Genesis game owners despite that small flaw in the making of this game.

-Pete Foote

ACES OF THE PACIFIC DYNAMIX
FLIGHT SIMULATOR IBM
1 PLAYER ADJUSTABLE

GRAPHICS: 8 CONTROL: 8
SOUND: N/A FUN: 9
OVERALL: 8

This is one of the best flight sims I've ever played in my whole life (all 15 years of it). It's once again another great game from Dynamix, the makers of RED BARON and A-10 TANK KILLER. You can do everything in this game, fight famous aces, fly escort for bombers, blow up carriers, shoot at tents, it's great! You can fly a single mission or enlist in a full career. With the career option you can fly for either the Americans or the Japanese forces. As you progress in the career mode you receive medals and promotions which can eventually lead to you commanding your own flight. There are 20 different airplanes to fly including the famous Mitsubishi Zero, the Kate torpedo bomber. P-38 Lightning, the

hellcat, and the Dauntless Divebomber among others. Each plane has it's own flight characteristics which are realistically modeled. I highly recommend this game to those who enjoy historically accurate sims. One of the better features of the game is how you can fly fighters, torpedo bombers and dive bombers. It's just a nice little change from the same old thing.

-Pete Foote

BAD STREET BRAWLER MATTEL
FIGHTING NES
1 OR 2 PLAYERS AVERAGE

GRAPHICS: 8 CONTROL: 8
SOUND: 7 FUN: 9
OVERALL: 8

This is neither a realistic game nor an original game. It is a lot of fun.

This fighter is an average looking guy with three attacks which change after each round. One attack is assigned to button A, one to button B, and one to buttons A and B pressed simultaneously. The attacks include sweep kick, high kick, drop kick, punch, stooge hit, trip, pile driver, body fling, headbutt, gut knee, and arm spin. The coolest two are the ear twist, in which you grab the enemy's ears, and twist away, and the aeroplane spin in which you hold your enemy's feet and spin him over your head, during which he somehow remains upright.

The enemies include midgets with morning stars which they can use to fly and attack, punk guys with baseball bats, banana throwing gorillas, knife throwing punk chicks, strange looking police with guns, fat guys that attack with their bellies, breakdancers and skateboarders.

The object is to get to the end of each street and defeat the occasionally tough boss character.

The sound is average and the music is hokey, but the ear twist, aeroplane spin and pile driver sound very good.

The background graphics look kinda Intellivisionish, but the characters are nicely detailed.

The variety is part of what makes this game great. It's deliciously fun to twist a gorilla's ears, and the trip move looks like you're molesting the enemy.

I don't know what to say about this game. When I first saw it, I thought "That's pathetic". Try it and see.

Bad street Brawler was released for the power glove, Mattel's gauntlet of marketing foolishness, NES controllers are compatible.

- Mark Allen

SUPER SMASH TV ACCLAIM
ACTION SNES
1 or 2 PLAYERS HARD

GRAPHICS: 9 CONTROL: 9
SOUND: 10 FUN: 9
OVERALL: 9

"Big money, big prizes, I love it!" So do I! This has to be one of the best arcade to home adaptations I've ever seen. When I first saw this game in the arcade I thought back to the good old days and many hours of Robotron 2084. I was a single warrior blasting my way through different rooms collecting prizes and shredding multitudes. As I played I thought "Damn, this would be a good Nintendo game." Well, I'll be damned. The next thing you know I'm cross legged next to Pat collecting good meat and wasting ammo. Now let's cut to the chase. Consider the power difference between a quarter muncher and the SNES. Okay with that in mind, the graphics are awesome. Not as sharp and clean as the arcade, but just as detailed. What limited the graphics was the censoring. The blood just wasn't flown' like in the stand up.

On the same note the control was excellent. You can stop on a dime and run circles around the opposition. And with the four available fire buttons you have the fire capacity of the arcade.

Power-ups are plentiful and just like the arcades. Speed-up, shotgun and the incredible "Spew gun" can turn you into a one man dream machine; if it does you any good. The intensity of this game is like something I've only seen in a shooter like Musha. Literally thousands of enemys, swarms of bullets and bosses that you have to fight to believe. That's the surprise. Rent this game, buy this game, play this game even if just to see these insane bosses! (Watch for Scarface!)

Nevertheless, this game is guaranteed to bring many hours of thumb numbing action to any one ballsy enough to get their mits on this sucker.

I honestly hope that Nintendo also picks up the sequel "Total Carnage" because a game like "Smash TV" is tough to beat. You won't be disappointed with this one. How bad can a game be where you can win a years supply of good meat?

- Rich Plummer



**CYBORG JUSTICE
FIGHTING
1 OR 2 PLAYERS**

**SEGA
GENESIS
AVERAGE**

GRAPHICS: 8
SOUND: 6

CONTROL: 6
FUN: 6

OVERALL: 6

Cyborg Justice is Heavy Nova set in a Double Dragon like universe, but with better graphics and the same control.

The box hypes over 200 different combinations of cyborgs available, which is technically correct, but there's so little difference in most of them that Sega should have just created 3 or 4 totally unique ones instead. It's even worse that all of your enemies are merely different combinations of the same parts you get to build your character out of.

Let's talk about those parts. The only important one is the weapon hand, which is very difficult to implement in combat anyway, because your cyborg always has to wind up to use it, and the enemies will invariably leap in and thwack him before he gets a shot off. Most of the parts are useless or make no difference in your character. All of the torsos, for example. They look different, but I found no real advantage in any of them. The same applies to the legs. While the pneumatic legs are fun to watch, play control is so bad that you'll often propel over the opponent.

Now, I didn't give the game an 8 for graphics for nothing. However, that number only applies to the characters themselves. The backgrounds absolutely suck. Character animation and attacks are great, though, especially the effect of dismembering an enemy robot, which is accompanied by the best sound effect in the game, a sort of metallic popping noise. It is truly entertaining to rip the torso off of an enemy, a move which instantly kills him, and then chuck the part at another guy.

Gameplay is on the bad side, unfortunately. The music and majority of sound effects bite, and for some reason I never figured out, there are missiles flying at you from the sides of the screen throughout the entire game! This gets annoying fast. All of the moves are hard to do, especially the throws and hold attacks. Also, although the instruction book says that you can use an enemys' torso to revive your fighter, I found that

if your life bar is mostly full it hurts you to use the torso.

Basically what we have here is a good concept killed by lack of originality, bad controls and horrible backgrounds and music. Play Streets of Rage 2 instead.

- Pat Reynolds

**X-WING
SPACE COMBAT
1 PLAYER**

**LUCASARTS
IBM
HARD**

GRAPHICS: 10
SOUND: N/A

CONTROL: 9
FUN: 10

OVERALL: 10

This game has been a dream of mine ever since the movie Star Wars. I picked it up the first day I saw it on the shelf. In this great sim you get to take on the might of the Empire as the pilot of an X-Wing, Y-Wing, or the small but maneuverable A-Wing.

The graphics are beyond belief and the explosions unreal. By using polygon based graphics X-Wing sets new standards for all space age flight sims of the future. I HIGHLY recommend this game to everyone who has an IBM or compatible. I have yet to play a game better than this one. Next issue I'll have a more in-depth look at the game. Until we meet again!

-Pete Foote

- NOTE: Pete is not deaf. He does not have a sound board for his IBM yet. He will have one for next issue and will tell you how all these games sound as well.

**FLASHBACK
ADVENTURE
1 PLAYER**

**U.S. GOLD
GENESIS
AVERAGE**

GRAPHICS: 9
SOUND: 8

CONTROL: 8
FUN: 8

OVERALL: 8

Delphine Software strikes again! They surpass their outstanding Out of This World in almost every category. Let me get the major flaw out of the way. Besides being too easy and short, Flashback just doesn't have the same sense of atmosphere and eeriness found in OOTW. The first game was like nothing I'd ever seen before, Flashback is a lot closer to dozens of other action games. Also, although the game has been referred to by almost every prozine

as the sequel to OOTW, it has absolutely no relationship plotwise to the first game. For Flashbacks' plot, see They Live by John Carpenter.

The animation is incredible, much smoother and more realistic than in OOTW. You have a much wider selection of moves as well. There are several Prince of Persia inspired actions, such as climbing up and lowering yourself down ledges, along with moves like running, walking, rolling and 4 different jumps.

There is almost no music, except when some action or fight occurs. The sound effects are great, especially the sound when you shoot a wall and it echoes around.

The control take some getting used to, but is easy when you get the hang of it.

Each stage is like a game in itself. In level 2, for example, you must complete several odd jobs in order to earn enough money to buy forged papers from a guy named Jack. You must ride the subway from stop to stop, doing tasks like delivering a package, escorting a scientist to the research center, and hunting down a rogue Replicant.

The cinema intermissions get mixed reactions from me, mainly because I don't care for the style of the art much (me being a big Japanimation fan), and I liked the cinemas in OOTW much better. However, there are a lot of them, and the animation is very good. Conrad looks like a 12-year-old in some of them, though.

While the CD game on a cart boast may be a little premature (where's the access time?), Flashback is the best Genesis game so far this year, and it looks like it will hold that honor until SFII:CE comes out in summer.

- Pat Reynolds

**CADASH
ACTION**

**WORKING DESIGN
TURBOGRAFX-16**

1 OR 2 PLAYERS

AVERAGE

GRAPHICS: 8
SOUND: 7

CONTROL: 7
FUN: 8

OVERALL: 8

For an arcade to TurboGrafx conversion, Cadash holds up remarkably well.

Unlike the Genesis version, all 4 of the characters are present, and the graphics are crisp and colorful, reminding me of TG-16 classic The Legendary Axe.

The difficulty curve is odd for some characters. Playing with the Ninja or the Priestess gives the biggest challenge, but once you get the Mage to level 13 or 14, I forget which, look out! He learns a spell that unleashes bolts of super-powered homing lightning that fry everything on screen. He also begins to regenerate his magic meter quickly, making him damn near invincible. The fighter gets really strong in the higher levels as well, making the game fairly easy with him too.

There are some great graphic effects in Cadash, like the exploding zombies, the grabbing hands, and the huge Fire Demon boss. Other bosses from the arcade, like the Black jelly and Catapillar are done well.

Between dungeons you can explore a city, stopping to rest, revive a dead partner, buy weapons or healing items, and get clues from the townspeople. This adds a bit of a role-playing twist to the game, and gives it more depth.

One of the better TG-16 games, and definitely worth the small price I've seen it for recently, Cadash is worthy of any collection.

-Pat Reynolds

HELLFIRE
SHOOTER
1 PLAYER

SEISMIC
GENESIS
HARD

GRAPHICS:8
SOUND:7

CONTROL:8
FUN:9

OVERALL:8

When you first see this game, it appears to be decent at best. But, it is really an excellent game.

At first the game play seems odd, because the first button is for changing the direction in which the ship fires, the second button is for shooting, and the third button is for using your ultimate weapon, the "HELLFIRE". Notice the reference to the ultimate weapon the ancient Greeks used against the Persians. The ship shoots from four directions up-down, forwards, backwards, and from all four corners.

There are also live power-ups, you start out at bullets, move to missiles, and end up at lasers which has three upgrades. This game is great! Although it is very difficult.

-Matt Sonefeld

SPIDERMAN
ACTION
1 PLAYER

SEGA
GENESIS
AVERAGE

GRAPHICS: 8
SOUND: 8

CONTROL: 7
FUN: 8

OVERALL: 8

Some games are done with the distinct style of Japanimation, but other games, such as Spiderman, are done in the distinct American comic book style.

Believe it or not, I have a small gripe; there isn't a large enough variety of enemies in the game, but one thing that's great is the occasional appearance of Venom.

The control is OK, and it's quite easy. The A button is for special options, B button for attacks and button C is for jumping (in combination with button A, Spidey shoots a web to swing from).

Overall this game isn't like its' arcade counterpart, but it is more than worthy of bearing the title Spiderman.

- Matt Sonefeld

FATAL FURY
FIGHTING
1 OR 2 PLAYERS

TAKARA
GENESIS
EASY

GRAPHICS: 8
SOUND: 7

CONTROL: 5
FUN: 6

OVERALL: 6

Like all of the Street Fighter clones so far, Fatal Fury, Takaras' second Neo-Geo portover (King of The Monsters being the first) falls short in vital areas.

First, in comparison with the original game, of course the graphics and sounds aren't up to par, but to its' credit the graphics at least are very good. Missing from this version altogether are Hwa Jai and Billy Kane, and the bonus stages. Also, although moves for Geese Howard, the final opponent, are listed in the instruction book, we found no way to play as him in the two player mode.

Now, the control is the thing that really gets this game the thumbs down.

they're almost impossible to execute with any regularity. I found that using my TurboTouch 360 controller (which I got free in the mail for some reason I never figured out) actually helped pull a couple of the easier ones off.

A big plus, which helps maintain interest in this game through a two-day rental period, is the ability to play as all of the characters (except Geese) in the two-player mode, while only three are available in the one player game.

The game goes by too quickly, especially with the absence of some of the original enemies. Once you get used to the play, which has the annoying feature of moving your characters from the foreground and background unexpectedly, it's not too difficult to walk through the game.

I certainly hope Takara takes more time doing Art of Fighting for SNES, and although Fatal Fury has the best graphics on the Genesis so far in a fighting game, Deadly Moves and Fighting Masters remain better games.

- Pat Reynolds

BATMAN RETURNS
ACTION
1 PLAYER

SEGA
GENESIS
HARD

GRAPHICS: 6
SOUND: 4

CONTROL: 5
FUN: 5

OVERALL: 5

This game, like most movie portovers, is totally unoriginal and downright sucks.

The tunes are boring and unmemorable. The graphics are dark and boring (following the movie). There isn't much variety in backgrounds or enemies, which is another minus.

The control is quite inaccurate which adds more difficulty to the player having to compensate for bad control.

All in all, this game isn't much fun to play. Therefore, I nominate it for the Big Cheese Award.

- Matt Sonefeld



FANZINE FEEDBACK

The fanzines have been pouring in to Fantazine central. I've been getting 2 or 3 a day sometimes and I'm loving it. There's a lot of great stuff being put out by gamers floating around, and this is the place for me to rave about what my fellow faneds are doing.

PARADOX MONTHLY/\$1.00
CHRIS JOHNSTON
316 E 11TH AVENUE
NAPERVILLE IL 60563-2708
ISSUE REVIEWED: SEMI ANNUAL (\$2.00)

I should point out that Paradox is a four Editor fanzine, the other three being Jason Whitman, Tim Johnson, and Justin Schuh. Chris, formally Head Editor, makes a big deal out of the equality among the Head Staff.

Paradox is filled to bursting with opinion columns, something I wish more 'zines would do. There are columns dedicated to the Lynx, arcades, handhelds, as well as several general opinion articles. Personal favorites include Johnstons' Licensing: A Foot In The Door, Or In The Grave? and Jeff Bogumils' Concordant Opposition.

The layout and editing of Paradox is top-notch, and common fanzine features like game reviews, tips, and 'zine reviews are done very well.

These guys deserve accolades for their efforts and will surely go far in Fandom.

VIDEO UNIVERSE NO FREQUENCY LISTED/\$1.50
GEORGE WILSON and CHAD LAUBACH
7640 WOODBINE ROAD
MACUNGIE PA 18062
ISSUE REVIEWED: 4

George and Chads' enthusiasm for gaming really shows in this fanzine. Good cover and interior artwork and a well-drawn, if highly unoriginal, Final Fight comic strip make VU a visually pleasing 'zine.

There is one thing I would like to see the Editors' of VU omit, or at least cut down on, in future issues. This is the overwhelming use of box art and screen shots, sometimes filling entire pages. Remember that almost everybody who reads fanzines has already seen these photos in color, and are probably more interested in reading what the writers think of the game. To be fair, the photos are copied well and relate to the text, but I see them as wasted space that could have been used for more reviews or whatever.

Overall, Video Universe is a good 'zine and is worth checking out.

SUPER NES GAMER BI-MONTHLY/\$1.50
ERIC LONGDIN
19 VERMONT ST
METHUEN MA 01844
ISSUE REVIEWED: 8

My biggest worry about a fanzine devoted entirely to one game system is that its' writer may not be objective in regard to the competition. I was relieved to see that Eric suffers no such bias. In fact, he even favorably reviews the Sega CD in this issue.

Highlights of this issue are a well-done evaluation of both Nintendo and Segas' TV commercials and previews of Renovation games for the SNES.

My only complaint, both minor and easily overlooked, is Eric's use of scanned images rather than photocopies, making some of them hard to see.

Super Nintendo owners will benefit from sending for a copy of Super NES Gamer, especially for the previews of upcoming games (this was the first place I heard about Renovations' SNES games).

CONCORDANT OPPOSITION BI-MONTHLY/\$1.25
JEFF BOGUMIL
187 NORTH STATE ROUTE 2 APT B-201
NEW MARTINSVILLE WV 26155-1631
ISSUE REVIEWED: 1

CO is a very well done first issue. Jeff's writing style is interesting and humorous. CO is a diverse 'zine, with indications of branching into comic coverage in the near future.

My favorite bits from this issue are the title (which Jeff does explain in his editorial), and his 8-Bit Revival article, which deals with theories about the absence of design-your-own-game type programs for game systems. Also noteworthy is an interview with Noah Dziobecki, Editor of Phanzine Star, and, God help us, more SFII Game Genie codes.

Since Jeff wrote to me and told me that he's also a die-hard MegaMan fan, he automatically has my support, but don't let that stop you from getting a copy of CO as soon as possible.

HYPERZINE BI-MONTHLY/\$1.25
MATT LOTTI
3251 CAMELOT DRIVE
BETHLEHEM PA 18017-1707
ISSUE REVIEWED: 2

Matt has an impressive lineup of contributors, including Ulrich Kempf and Jess Ragan, and is a talented writer in his own right.

The layout is very well done, with a good review section and opinion columns. This issues' features include a step by step walkthrough of Shadowgate (all 156 of them!) and an interesting movie/music review section.

Easy reading is a staple of a good fanzine, and Hyperzine hits the mark.

RECOMMENDED READING

These are some fanzines you shouldn't miss. Look for more detailed reviews in upcoming issues of Fantazine.

NEXT GENERATION 3 ISSUES/\$10
CASEY LOE 8 ISSUES/\$24
5961 CANON CT
VENTURA CA 93003

SPECTRUM \$1 PER ISSUE
ARA SHIRINIAN
10904 HAISLIP CT
POTOMAC MD 20854

MASTER MINDS \$1 PER ISSUE
TODD LINTNER
6406 JACOBS WAY
MADISON WI 53711-3209

IN BETWEEN THE LINES .75/ISSUE
SEAN PETTIBONE
2406 RED MAPLE CT
TROY MI 48098

DIGITAL PRESS \$1.25 PER ISSUE
JOE SANTULLI
29 CUPSAW AVENUE
RINGWOOD NJ 07456-2919

VIDEO VIEWS \$1.50/ISSUE
ULRICH KEMPF
4732 GLENWOOD CIRCLE
EMMAUS PA 18049

Okay, a few words about the above 'zines. As I said before, I think Digital Press should have gotten Best Fanzine from EG; as it is they were runner up. Definitely not to be missed. Next Generation; I thought I wasn't going to have too much competition in the art department, but the cover to issue 12 is outstanding! First honest look at a demo tape of SFII:CE for Genesis and full CES coverage, 3DO review and perfect layout are highlights!!! Video Views has a large pool of Faneds contributing, with good art and great layout. In Between The Lines features loads of honest EGM style reviews in issue #1, a must see, especially for the price. Spectrum covers Super Famicom games, with reviews of not-seen-in-the-U.S. games like Parodius. Master Minds has been improving steadily, and is easily one of the most readable 'zines out there with humorous reviews and good movie and fanzine review sections. Look for cover art by me on upcoming issues of both Master Minds and Video Views.

WILLARDS WORDS

BY DAVID WILSON

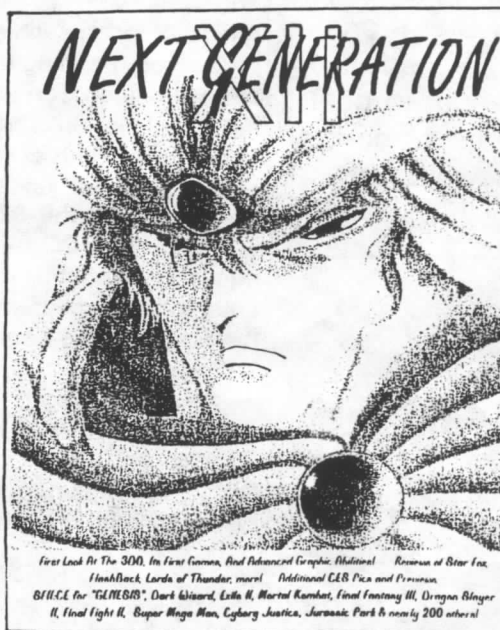
Welcome to my column. And that means MINE. Basically what I say here goes, right?! Well, I could don the guise of OBNOXIOUS MAN, but I really don't think you game lovers would like that. I know I sure don't. Besides, some "Q-guy" does that obnoxious thing over at EGM. So I'm just going to chat away.

Today, class, I'd like to bring up something called a modem. You all know what a modem is. In fact, many of you that own a computer probably have a modem. But you don't use it because it either costs too much or the FBI will pay you a visit, like in Wargames. I just have two words for you: USE IT.

Modems connect you with the world like nothing else can. I mean, Television does a lot, sure, but it can't say anything about user interaction. That's where the modem comes in. You like games where you are competing against other LIVE people? Bulletin Board Systems (BBSs) are set up to provide "modemers" with just that, plus much more. And sure, some BBSs involve spending money, but only if you call long-distance.

Ever since I bought my modem, I've used it constantly. I believe that I'm now a member of about 40 BBSs, with about 100 more in the area I can choose from. And you know how much it costs me? Nothing.

I recommend that if you have a modem, try it out. I think you'll like what's out there and made available to you. Next issue I'll give you the numbers of some of the best BBSs in Grand Rapids. Until then...See Ya...



COVER OF THE MONTH

NEXT GENERATION #12
BY

JOSH KESSLER

ACCESS GRANTED

Not a whole lot in the way of passwords and tips this time around, but I do want to be the first to print every password for Flashback for Genesis by U.S. Gold. Note: these passwords are for the Normal difficulty setting.

DATA - New Washington

MILORD - Death Tower (I hated this stage)!

QUICKY - Earth

BIJOU - Paradise Club/Prison (Don't forget to pick up your gun).

BUBBLE - Planet Morph

CLIP - Last stage, still on the planet.

Now, for those of you who don't want to play through the game to get to the end, there's a special password that lets you watch the ending, which replays almost every cinema in the entire game! I really had to wrestle with my conscience about printing this one, because there's something about seeing the ending of a game that makes you just not want to beat it as much anymore, which is why I wish EGM and GamePro would stop running those damn Game Over and GameBusters sections. After seeing the ending of Phantasy Star II printed in EGM after I had played it for months and was just about to beat it myself, it just didn't seem as special. Anyway, use this password at your own risk: CYGNUS

CD SYSTEMS: THE LOST CAUSE?

BY JESS RAGAN

Editor Pat Reynolds seems to be aching for the Sega CD-ROM. Well, I'd hate to burst your bubble, Pat, but I personally think that this recent uproar in "multimedia" gaming will result in little more than wasted money on the part of gamers across the country. Why? This article will touch upon the failure that is the multimedia movement and what the 3DO system by the San Mateo Software Group can do to make videogaming (not to mention CD-ROM gaming) as widespread and viable a media as TV is without systems attached.

There are several reasons why the CD-ROM format as "multimedia" will simply not work as an entertainment medium. First off, the CDs' power is rarely fully utilized. Many of the games for BOTH sets are nothing more than enhanced versions of their cartridge counterparts. At other times, the game takes the other extreme and offers up well done cartoon and video scenes - with cost to playability. One is left wondering if he or she has ever really played the game at all.

The fact that the systems are primarily owed by younger players doesn't help matters much. With Nintendos' opposition to adult themes and the game licensees preference not to stretch the limits of good taste, how on earth would that warrant anyone plunking down \$300 for something that won't even entertain or impress (which goes back to my last point) them?

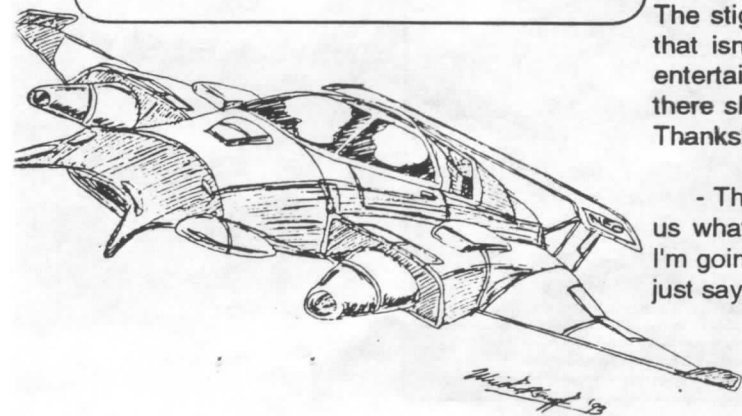
Another factor is the video game systems themselves. They are simply not designed to handle this power! The Genesis and TurboGrafx-16 were designed in a time when the CD music system was not widespread. As a result, full screen animation or video is nearly impossible without keeping the CD under Access almost continuously - meaning that the CD will "run dry" and the player will need to put in another (i.e. Night Trap).

There are other factors as well - the "multimedia" format is already overrun with incompatible systems! All of them seem guaranteed to crash and burn, as they just get in each others' way, preventing those interested from getting involved. Smart consumers are NOT going to buy a system if it won't be supported with enough varied software. If there's a deluge of software for a competing set (and you own the other one!) it will all be for naught.

Luckily, the 3DO (by the joint venture of Electronic Arts, Warner Bros., and Matsushita) could change all that, provided that its' competition is not a herd of incompatible rip-offs. You see, the 3DO runs from a 32-Bit RISC processor, meaning that true broadcast quality video (and lots of it) can be used in conjunction with the actual game. But, with its' high price (and the history of its' outcropping of predecessors), it can still fail if it does not follow in the path of other media forms (i.e. the VHS VCR, the radio, etc.). First of all, it can under no circumstances be deemed as "multimedia". For it to succeed, the 3DO has to come off as broad-based entertainment. The stigma of CD-based sets will decrease its' base dramatically - and if that isn't changed, the chance that video gaming will ascend to a true entertainment medium will be practically unrealistic. For more information there should be a similar article in Project:Ignition #5, if you're interested. Thanks!

- The 3DO issue is becoming a major source of debate. Write and tell us what you think of "the new standard of video gaming entertainment". I'm going to reserve my judgement on the 3DO for a future issue, but let's just say we all know how well the Neo-Geo fared with its' price tag of \$700.

- Pat



PAT GETS HIS CD

BY PAT REYNOLDS

Yep, I finally gave in and bought, charged actually, a Sega CD. Now I can look forward to paying \$30 a month for the next year! Is it worth it? I think so, and now I'm gonna tell you why.

First let's run through the free stuff. The music disc makes a good coaster, and the CD+G disc, well, let's just say I've always wanted a shiny silver frisbee. Seriously, it's kinda fun to watch for about five minutes, but the lack of animation and slow screen changes make it monotonous. Sol-Feace is the same bland shooter it was on cartridge, with the addition of a voiced-over monologue and improved cinema. The classic disc is okay, but why is Golden Axe only one-player? The new screams in both GA and Streets Of Rage sound cheesy but more realistic than they did on cart. The enemies in Golden Axe distinctly say "Ouch" when you kill them! Columns is the only game on this disc I haven't owned before, and it's a pretty good Tetris take-off. No startling innovations in any of these games. You know, it seems to me that Sega should have included more variety here; this disc has three action titles (the other being Revenge Of Shinobi) and one puzzle game. What about sports games or a racing title? Oh well.

Sherlock Holmes is the "Wow, look at that full-motion video" addition to the pack-in assortment. Sure, it will amaze your little brother and confuse and frighten Mom and Dad ("That's coming from a CD?"), but we know better. The video is grainy, washed-out and fuzzy. The voices are quite good, and this is actually a decent game with long play life and dozens of sources to check out while forming solutions to various mysteries. Access time really slows it down, though.

On a scale of 1-10, the Sega CD gets a 9; the pack-in stuff rates a 6 in my book - Sega really should have added something new.

SHOOT WHAT?!

BY RICH PLUMMER

I'm a great shooter fan, since back in the days of Space Invaders and the original Asteroids. To date my absolute favorite shooters are Musha, Gaiarses and Aero Blasters (Air Buster...what the hell). Besides those, I've played countless others, most of which were timeworthy, others that just plain sucked.

When Renovation released Gaiarses, all of a sudden we had a standard for shooters to follow. The good guys had countless weapons to choose from; Mega Beam, Spread, Homing, Cluster Bomb, and variable Plasma Shot. The enemies became more gruesome also; a giant Grim Reaper, Mecha Insects, Armored Skull Bug Shooty Nasty Things, and Giant Organic, Pulsing, Oozing Things that transform 3 times before liquidating and becoming a puddle of snot.

Graphics have become more dazzling and sound tracks have started to blow the speaker out of the damn TV, but they all follow the same pattern. You work your way from nothing into a multi-weaponed world destroyer while your enemy masses an assault that would make you shit.

What continues to amaze me is the assortment of silly things that are shot at you. The "Rings of Death" or Cheerio laser found in Thunder Force III, snaky things like in Sinistron, scads of little annoying bullets like the ones in Wings Of War and crescent shaped worm babies found in Super R-Type. Sometimes I think that the enemy would just as soon have you barf on your ships controls than die by fire.

I'm glad that the imagination of the programmers has kept me entertained for all these years, and I hope it can stay fresh for years to come.

MEET THE TEAM

Introducing the first half of Team Fantazine. The rest of us will be in next issue.

PAT REYNOLDS

AGE: 21

OCCUPATION: Student, Pharmacy boy.

SYSTEMS: NES, Genesis, SMS, Gameboy, TurboGrafx-16, SNES, Sega CD.

FAVORITE GAMES: MegaMan, Streets of Rage 2, Fantasy Zone 2, MegaMan(GB), Bomberman 93, SFII, and Road Avenger.

HOBBIES: Drawing like a maniac, Anime, Manga, paying credit card bills.

PETE FOOTE

AGE: 15

OCCUPATION: Student

SYSTEMS: Intellivision, NES, Genesis, IBM 486SX.

FAVORITE GAMES: Genghis Khan, Phantasy Star II, Aces Of The Pacific.

HOBBIES: Gaming, Modeling, Military History.

DAVID WILSON

AGE: 18

OCCUPATION: Grocery Clerk

SYSTEMS: NES, Gameboy, Genesis, Amiga 500.

FAVORITE GAMES: Mario 3, Faceball 2000, Flashback, and The Killing Game Show.

TIM PRIEST

AGE: 21

OCCUPATION: Crime Fighter

SYSTEMS: I hate the system!!!

HOBBIES: Reading comic books and then working the plots into everyday life.

PATS' PICKS

These are some games which I think should not be missed by anyone. By the way, this column will be open to ANYONE who wants to share their opinions of games which are important to them.

HERZOG ZWEI (Genesis) - The only military simulation which allows to players to compete simultaneously! Perfect blend of action and strategy, and the real-time combat really makes the game intense. Way ahead of its' time when released and overlooked by many who were turned off by the different style of gameplay. Good graphics and sound for its' time too. Most fun with two players.

SILENT DEBUGGERS (TG-16) - Goofy title aside (gotta love those Japanese to English translators!), this is a good game. You must exterminate a bunch of buggy aliens while protecting the core blocks from attack. Done in a realistic, if choppy, Phantasy Star first person maze perspective, you move through corridors and rooms searching for and eliminating the enemy. Time limit and tricky aliens don't help matters. Lots of items and weaponry to choose from, with your pal Leon supplying you with more occasionally.

U.N. SQUADRON (SNES) - Based on the coin-op which is based on the Japanese comic book Area 88, but changed to add strategy elements. You play as one of 3 mercenary pilots in this side-scrolling shooter by Capcom. While the coin-op was just your basic shooter, the SNES version adds new levels, the ability to choose which stage to go to, and the chance to buy new and better planes. On the down side, not all special weapons work for all planes. Remarkably more faithful to the comic, as Shin Kazama starts the game flying an A6E Intruder, and must buy new planes, just like in the original manga!

CLASH AT DEMONHEAD (NES) - This game is a lot of fun. A MegaMan style action game, with a large number of levels and the ability to choose your route, as well as cartoony graphics and lots of power up suits and weapons, available at shops. Good enemies and hard bosses, as well as high level of overall difficulty keep this one on my all time favorite list.

FACEBALL 2000 (Gameboy) - The first pseudo virtual reality game for the Gameboy, and actually better than the SNES version! Multi-player is the best way to go, as the one player game gets pretty boring quick. Still, lots of options, such as choosing your face and naming it help to personalize the game.

ZILLION 2 - THE TRI-FORMATION (SMS) - The first SMS game I had, and still one of the best. Great graphics which really show off the Master Systems' superiority over the NES, good gameplay, and varied stages help keep it interesting.

BOMBERMAN (TG-16) - If you have a TurboTap and one or two extra controllers, you must have this game! The ultimate in multiplayer competition, with good graphics, great control and tons of strategy and excitement! One of the best game concepts ever made. The one player mode gets repetitive fast, though.

CLASSICS CORNER

BY PAT REYNOLDS

I remember long summer days many years past when my brother and I would spend hours at a friends playing his Atari 2600. It was like a whole new world to me, and the game that I have the fondest memories of is called Adventure.

ADVENTURE	ATARI
ADVENTURE(DUH!)	2600
1 PLAYER	AVERAGE

GRAPHICS: 7	CONTROL: 9
SOUND: 8	FUN: 8

OVERALL: 8

Adventure casts you in the role of (what else?) an Adventurer whose mission is to locate the Golden Chalice and return it to the Golden Castle. Actually you're character is no more than a square, and you move him through several mazes, catacombs, and rooms trying to find helpful items like the sword, keys to open castles (of which there are three), the magnet to retrieve items out of reach or stuck in walls, and ultimately the Golden Chalice. 3 Dragons are scattered throughout the land in random locations. They chase you with varying levels of persistence; if you get the Red Dragon on your tail, look out!

Aside from the threat of the Dragons, which aren't much of a threat if you have the sword, there's a bat that switches the position of some items and will even steal your possession (you can only carry one item at a time). You can trick the bat into grabbing a dead Dragon and drop whatever it's carrying at the time.

Since the items and enemies locations change in each new game, Adventure is always fresh and surprising. Graphics are sparse, but the sound effects are very good. I still jump when a Dragon eats me unexpectedly.

This is the kind of game that personifies what good games should be: fun. The control is perfect, and the challenge is always up there (you have to play on level 3 for a real quest). Atari 2600 owners (all 5 of them) need to have this game in their collection. It is truly a classic.

COMIC VIEW

BY TIM PRIEST

And so it begins... And so I begin. I've heeded the call, I've pulled the sword from the stone, I've readied my battleaxe and prepare to forge into the melee... a guest editorial.

I bow to no man, woman, or child, nor shall I bow to any lowly readers. I want no trouble. I just have a job to do and I will do it. Get in my way and you shall be crushed beneath my heels and choke on my dust for centuries. A thorn in my side will not be tolerated, it will be obliterated. Beware the ides of March they say, "Bah". Screw them! Beware me! Mars, Ares, and Loki seek my advice. Wotan, Odin, and Zeus are but pups in my pen. The power of the pen is now mine to command and the whole world shall crumble beneath it.

So let's get on with it. Today's topic is the misrepresentation of comic book heroes in movies. Writers of the big screen take it upon themselves to blatantly disregard previous details. This isn't a new problem. In the 1940s' Batman serial Robin was at least 30 and about the same size as Batman. In the old Shazam serials Captain Marvel would be soaring after the Nazi villains one minute and blowing them away with a machine gun the next. Captain Marvel was but a boy; he has the wisdom of Solomon. He'd never shoot anyone, Nazi or not.

A major mistake of the movie industry was the production of the 1978 Dr. Strange movie. The movie goes minutes on end with nothing but background disco music. As we all know, Dr. Strange is an avid disco lover. He must have been relieved due to the fact that his fabled trek to the Orient had been replaced by the simple inheritance of a ring and the introduction of another sorcerer supreme.

I'm not even going to discuss the Captain America travesty, nor do I have the time to delve into the problems of the recent Batman movies, but suffice it to say I believe the best comic related movie so far has been The Flash TV series which isn't technically a movie, but hey, it's my column.



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PLUM SEZ...

BY RICH PLUMMER

Howdy! Those of you who have read the first issue of that fine fanzine GameLord might be familiar with my little bit of notoriety; I'm the "bud" Pat mentions that joined the Navy. As a matter of fact, I'm chuggin through the Adriatic Sea on my way to Turkey as I write this.

As Pat wrote, we were fired up to get our first idea, Megazine, on the racks, but that lost steam. Later I did join the Navy and Pat got fired up and turned out GameLord. And what a fine job he did! You'll find as I write more and more that Pats' views and mine are very similar. We're both great at video games and sometimes we end up bustin' our nuts trying to outdo the other. Friendly competition never hurts anyone!

Let me give you a little info as to what turns my crank. Aside from games that everyone should love; Blaster Master, all the MegaMan, The Guardian Legend, and SFII, I'm also a huge fan of shooters. Blazing Lasers, Musha, Gaias and R-Type are my favs' followed by a slew of others.

I also read comics. I'm totally into the Japanese scene (video and manga) and recently picked up a copy of Fist Of The North Star in Italian! Can you beat it!? Other than manga, Lobo, Buddy Bradley, and Deaths' Head II will get me slobbering. My favorite anime, you ask? Dangaio, Nu Gundam, Uratsaki Dojiko and Hokuto No Ken (Fist of the North Star) are part of my library of favorites.

When I'm in a gaming mood or running around the house pretending to be Lobo, I have a beautiful fiancée who pats me on the head and says "It's okay honey". Ya gotta love her!

Remember, Sofia the 3rd is tougher than the Batmobile and Bionic Commando has nothing on John Holmes! Most of all...Never give up!

MORE STUFF

BY PAT REYNOLDS

Finishing up some GameLord business, the winner of the First Issue Contest is none other than Russ Perry Jr., who also happens to be the first official subscriber to Fantazine. Pretty gutsy of Russ to subscribe to a 'zine he's never seen before. Anyway, as promised, Russ gets every issue of GL ever made, which nets him a free copy of issue 2. Russ' solutions, you ask? He solved the number puzzle with 20 and two 0s'. The solution to the other one is below.

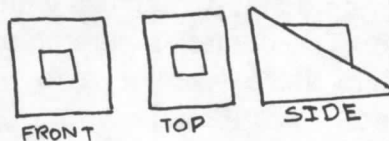
I just got a postcard from Sean Pettibone accepting my invitation to join on as an Associate Editor. Look for reviews or columns by Sean starting next issue, hopefully.

Right now, Fantazines' reader base is fairly low. I'm pushing 30 at press time, with the majority of those being faneds. Also, a lot of editors out there got copies of GameLord and never sent me a copy of their 'zines, so that narrows my final reader total even more. Still, if Katz notices us, maybe we'll pick up a few more.

Lined up to possibly contribute to future issues are Alex Frias, who recently changed from Video Gaming Monthly to Viewpoint (I'm still waiting to see the first issue) with Lynx reviews, and Jeff Bogumil, Editor of Concordant Opposition (great title!) to do a Comic View guest spot.

Fanzine editors who need cover art, look no further. I've done a Flashback cover for Master Minds (out now!), and a Mortal Kombat cover for Video Views (sometime this summer), and am willing to do art for anyone.

Okay, that about wraps things up for now. Next issue will have the Time Gal review (I was too lazy too change the cover when the game didn't come out in time for this issue)!



NEXT ISSUE

Reviews of Bubsy for SNES and Genesis.

The Standoff: I'll finally do that comparison of Deadly Moves and Power Moves.

More fanzine reviews: Spectrum and Next Generation for sure, plus Fanzine of the month.

Tim says something and you better damn well listen.

Blah,blah,blah friggin blah. That's right you better damn well listen. You there, the one with the finger up your nose, stop what you're doing and tell your friends(friend) to go out right now and order advance copies of Fantazine.

Sorry about that...We'll also do movie reviews and Top Tens, plus more art, promise!



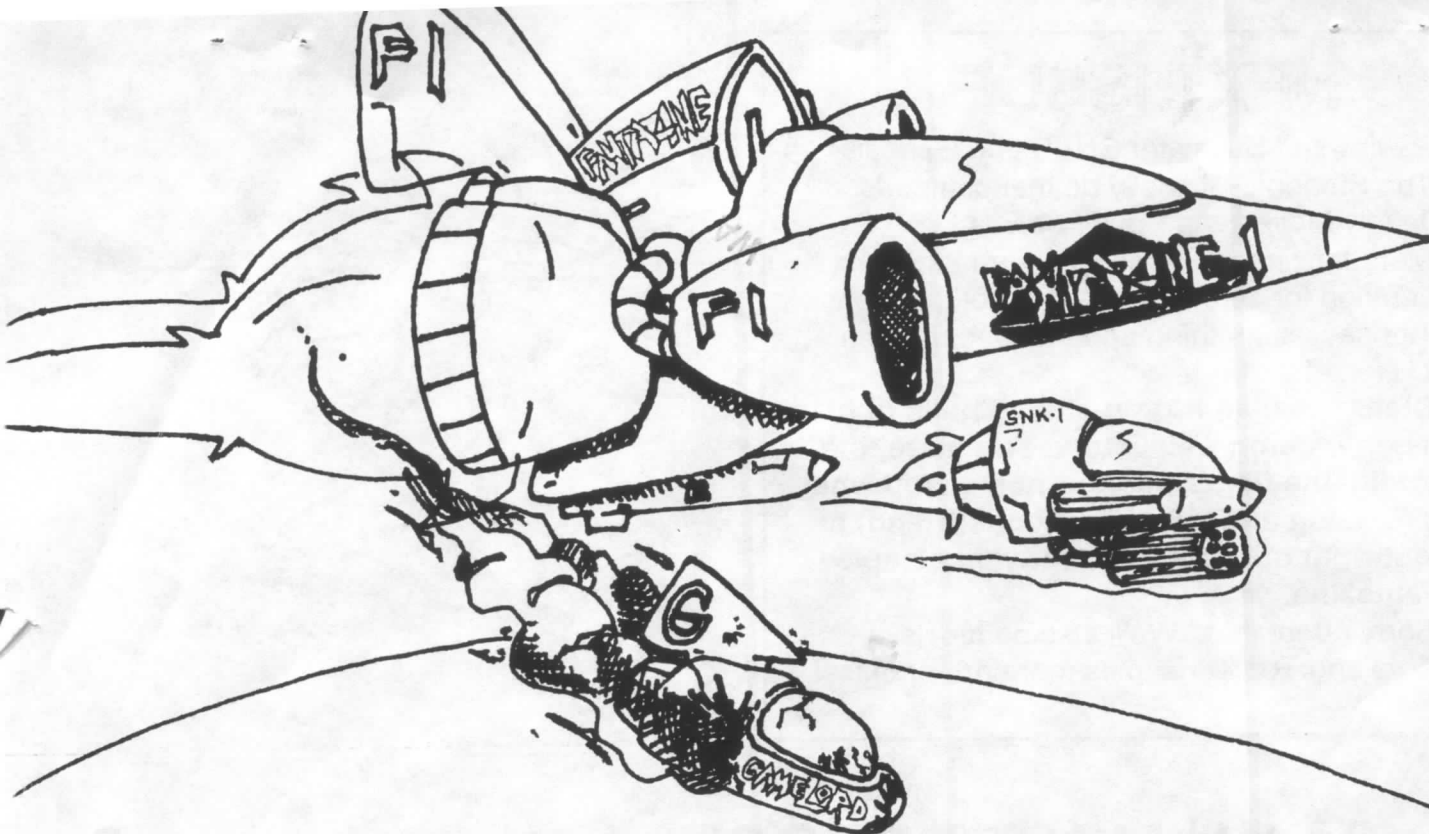
HEY, I ALMOST FORGOT...

GameMan, the ill-fated mascot of GameLord, will be making a reappearance sometime in the near future. I was disappointed in the outcome of that first strip; I shouldn't have shrunk it down so much, it got hard to read and lost detail. Anyhow, I've gotten 2 offers to do guest stories and I'm looking forward to seeing them both. One is Concordant Oppositions' Jeff Bogumil, who I must say hasn't confirmed the contribution yet, but I'm keeping my hopes up. The other is none other than our own Military man, Guile, er, Rich Plummer, who also mentioned an interest in doing a comic story featuring Capcoms' MegaMan, Bionic Commando, and Hiryu the Strider. Yeah, I'm livin' dangerously if I print a story about their characters, but hey. I lived through that GameLord episode, and I've seen worse cases of copyright infringement in 'zines, so if it's good it's going in.

I'm planning special issues for the future, one of which will feature the Bomberman games on TurbGrafx-16 and NES. Look for an all-Atari classics issue too. The special issues will run about 8 pages and will feature multi-reviews, strategies, and all-new covers! They will be free to subscribers or \$1.00 an issue.

Early in the planning stage is a very special one-shot fanzine slated for summer that should knock your socks off. More news when it's for sure (it's a collaboration thing)...





PAT 93

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